



The Voice of the Fire Sprinkler Industry

40 JON BARRETT ROAD • PATTERSON, NEW YORK 12563 • (845) 878-4200 • FAX (845) 878-4215
E-MAIL: INFO@NFSA.ORG • WEBSITE: [HTTP://WWW.NFSA.ORG](http://WWW.NFSA.ORG)

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Regulatory Reform Committee
Representative Hugh Crawford, Chairman
Committee Members

The National Fire Sprinkler Association on behalf of its state of Michigan membership wishes to express its **opposition to HB 4561** a Bill that would modify the current three year cycle for construction code review and adoption to a six year adoption schedule.

This proposal if adopted would place the state of Michigan out of sync with the International Code Councils (ICC) nationally recognized three year code development cycle. The ICC works on a three year cycle in order to insure the most current construction technology, construction techniques and occupant safety concerns are included in the nation's construction codes. In today's construction industry, construction technology and techniques change and improve at a rapid pace as does our knowledge as to how to best construct a building that is safe and will withstand extreme environmental conditions. The proposed six year cycle could lead to the state of Michigan trailing the national code development process by two to three revision cycles or up to nine years. One of the consequences of lagging so far behind the national cycles would be a higher statewide Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rate resulting in higher insurance rates for rate payers for both commercial and residential property insurance across the state of Michigan. I urge the Committee to check with the state Insurance Commissioner to research the future potential state wide insurance impact of this bill.

The extending of the construction Code review cycle would tie the hands or delay the states construction industry from using the most current safe and cost effective materials and techniques as the states new building inventory is constructed under antiquated codes. While there is a process by which products and techniques not found in current codes can be initiated that process is cumbersome and causes spotty implementation of such construction improvements and advantages.

It should also be noted that a cherry picking of a construction code as described above can lead unsafe buildings being constructed in the state. Many times changes in the nationally recognized codes appear as a tradeoff in another area of the code is taken.

There are many good reasons why the code adoption cycle should not be extended to six years as proposed in HB 4561. Let's recall why the codes are improved on a three year cycle at the national level. The purpose is to do all that can be done to insure a property owner who knows very little about building construction can feel confident that the building they have contracted to be built is of sound quality and will provide a safe area within which they can conduct their business or live. Citizens depend upon state officials to oversee the construction industry to insure their interest in the construction is properly managed leading to safe cost effective construction on their behalf. Quality construction and safe conditions is not a responsibility that should be taken lightly by state officials.

Ron Brown, Regional Manager
National Fire Sprinkler Association
40 Jon Barrett Rd
Patterson, NY 12563